

BREAKING NEWS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to submit statements into the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, breaking news. Today, the President of the United States signed the bipartisan infrastructure bill, legislation that our chairwoman and the Congressional Black Caucus were instrumental in moving forward.

But breaking news: The President, Vice President, and Speaker of the House made it very clear that we will pass the Build Back Better Act, and that they are two bills that go together. And so tonight, I am delighted to join the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus to discuss the pathway and the vitality of the Build Back Better Act.

There is one thing that I want to immediately speak to. Pell grants that is part of the Build Back Better will be an instrumental component to increasing the number of students at community colleges, historically Black colleges, and other colleges—minority-serving institutions—more than they have ever had the opportunity.

Madam Speaker, in 2021, there are still families that are sending their first generation to college. The Pell grants—unlike which was discussed just a few minutes ago—will give Americans and legal residents the opportunity to go to school, and many others who are DACA and are deserving of going to school to build a better future.

Madam Speaker, I will speak very briefly on how important the Build Back Better Act is, and to emphasize that it is often said that the Federal budget is an expression of the Nation's values. Build Back Better is an expression of our values, of our respect, and affection for our families and our children. It is long overdue.

And even though we are excited about the infrastructure bill that will bring some \$26.9 billion in transportation to Texas, some \$3.3 billion in ensuring the improvement of public transportation, making sure there is \$100 million for broadband, and making sure that we have clean water—and that is in the \$2.9 billion from the infrastructure bill. I can tell you that Texans and Americans are excited about the Build Back Better. African Americans who have suffered with poverty and inequities will stand at the forefront in helping to end poverty as we know it in our communities.

Madam Speaker, I am grateful to Chair BEATTY for her leadership and was eager to join my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus to stand together to support this \$1.75 trillion investment.

Very quickly: The bill is paid for. No one making under \$400,000 will see any taxes go up at this time. In addition, \$130 billion will be provided for healthcare.

Breaking news: If you are uninsured in States that never expanded Medicaid, you will have insurance; huge numbers of African Americans. Over 30 percent of seniors over the age of 70 can benefit from hearing aids as well. We know the Build Back Better bill will give us an additional amount of resources for uninsured persons and provide the access to the Affordable Care Act.

Childcare, which impacts African Americans, the Build Back Better Act will provide universal and free preschool for three- to four-year-olds and cut down the amount of dollars that many young working families have to pay. I am excited about the fact that we will be able to have working parents, they will be looking for work, but they will have the ability to have their children taken care of, and they won't pay more than 7 percent of their income for childcare; \$150 billion.

Madam Speaker, this weekend, I was at my public housing, public development. Families, they are going to see a new makeover, more housing built, and more down payments.

In fact, I am very grateful to say that we won't see these signs: "My landlord is calling and I must pay." How many were evicted because dollars were not getting to people who worked hard every day but yet, because of the pandemic and other factors, could not pay their rent.

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We will see that ended with the \$150 billion for housing; education, \$40 billion; and, of course, the Pell grants, as I said.

It is important to take note of the fact that poverty among African Americans will decrease seismically, particularly with the child tax credit that will end poverty as we know it among the impoverished children of America.

Again, I said, breaking news, the President signed the bipartisan infrastructure bill with the help of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Breaking news, we are committed to leading on helping to pass Build Back Better with all of our Democratic colleagues, and Madam Speaker, I don't think that we would be against our bipartisan colleagues joining us.

Let me conclude by saying that I am delighted to know this family at the Gingerbread daycare, founded by a husband and wife, for hardworking essential workers. How wonderful it will be that 3- to 4-year-olds can have universal access to school and childcare and can now be supported by the Build Back Better Act and paid family leave.

Breaking news, we are changing hearts and changing America, and I am delighted to yield to our chair and thank her for her leadership. Keep on leading. We are going to keep on standing so that we can pass the Build Back Better Act this week. I am going to claim it. We say that sometimes in our community.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY).

Mrs. BEATTY. Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to stand here tonight as chair of the Congressional Black Caucus. To be here at such a critical point in our country, in our democracy, on the heels of leaving the South Lawn of the White House where hundreds of people gathered in honor of supporting the \$1.2 trillion bipartisan infrastructure framework needed when we think about our roads and our bridges and our broadband.

Tonight, we are so honored to be here. To our chair of this night's Special Order hour, "Breaking News," I thank Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE, who is anchoring tonight and yielding to me.

Madam Speaker, let me just take this point of personal privilege to thank her. I thank her for her leadership and say to her and all of her constituents watching: Texas is all the better because of Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE. When I think of someone leading and talking about Build Back Better, talking about how great this is for America, thank you for being part of that leadership.

Now, tonight, let me simply say, Madam Speaker, when I look to build back better, I see the faces of the Congressional Black Caucus, six chairs of major committees. So let me do breaking news.

Breaking news, when we look to build back better housing, we know, across America, that we have a housing problem. We know that we needed more dollars going into housing, vouchers, and affordable housing.

Breaking news, Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS, chair of the powerful Financial Services Committee under which housing and insurance falls, she was iconic in her leadership, from the White House to the Speaker, working both sides of the aisle, and, yes, \$150 billion.

When I think of Congressman BOBBY SCOTT, I think of education and labor. There has not been a stronger voice in the Congress than BOBBY SCOTT in the Congressional Black Caucus. You heard earlier from Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE, Pell grants, HBCUs, historically Black colleges and universities, billions of dollars going into our universities.

Madam Speaker, let me take a point of personal privilege because I am a proud graduate of an HBCU, so I know what this means to young girls and boys and men and women who are matriculating in our HBCUs. We cannot have a democracy in a country without protecting our children. When we talk

about the child tax credit, when we talk about universal childcare, this is so critical.

Breaking news, \$400 billion—I want to say that again, \$400 billion—into childcare, taking some 40 percent of our children out of poverty.

We know how important our climate is to us, and if we didn't, if you were out on that South Lawn today, you clearly understood climate change. Madam Speaker, \$555 billion is in for climate change.

I am going to have other colleagues come today, and we are going to hear how important it is when we talk about taking lead out of our water, what that does for our children, for our families, for the environment.

Breaking news, \$1.7 trillion is in Build Back Better.

Earlier, one of the members of the Congressional Black Caucus said to me, "Tell our story." Well, you see, our fingerprints and footprints are all through this \$1.75 trillion, and if you don't claim it, people don't know it. So, I want everyone to know that the Congressional Black Caucus is so proud of Our Power, Our Message because we understand that our diversity is our strength and our unity is our power.

Tonight is so important for us to say: \$1.75 trillion, Build Back Better; \$1.2 trillion, bipartisan infrastructure framework. It was the Congressional Black Caucus that asked for a seat at the table.

The late Congressman John Lewis always said: If you see something, say something. So, Madam Speaker, the Congressional Black Caucus decided that we were going to say something. We were going to say something to make sure that all of our friends and colleagues came together so we could do what is great for America, and that is what we have done.

Let me say these closing remarks as we then call on our other colleagues. Let me simply say that I am honored to serve in the United States Congress, but I am extremely humbled and privileged and honored to be the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus in our 50th year of existence with the largest membership and the oldest of the caucuses in the Congress.

Madam Speaker, chair of our Special Order hour, Our Power, Our Message, we are the Congressional Black Caucus.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, what a grand statement from our chair who has captured the leadership of this entire body.

As I conclude my remarks, I just wanted to say, Madam Speaker, to the chair, this is what you are doing and what we are doing by pushing Build Back Better and putting our stamp on it.

Madam Speaker, 22.1 percent of Black people fall below the poverty line, struggling to pay expenses like food, rent, healthcare, and transportation for their families. But with the child tax cut, the Build Back Better Act provides a major tax cut to nearly

3 million Black people and cuts the Black poverty rate by 34.3 percent, which will help the 85 percent of Black women who are either sole or co-breadwinners for their families.

I am very pleased to be on the floor of the House with you, showing what will happen to many in the Black community who are out and about working and helping. This bill will help them, and it will help all of America. It will help those minorities who are in need.

May I say: Our Power, Our Message. I always like to say: Our Power, Our Message. That is what we are tonight, and I am delighted to have been able to join her at this time.

Madam Speaker, as a senior member of the Committees on the Judiciary, on Homeland Security, and on the Budget, and the Congressional Black Caucus, I am pleased to co-anchor this Congressional Black Caucus Special Order with my colleague, the distinguished gentleman from New York, Congressman RITCHIE TORRES.

I thank the Chair of the CBC, Congresswoman BEATTY of Ohio, for organizing this Special Order to discuss the reasons why the CBC strongly supports the \$1.75 billion Build Back Better Act conceived and advanced by President Biden and House Democrats to support visionary and transformative investments in the health, well-being, and financial security of America's workers and families.

Over the next hour, several of our colleagues will share their perspectives on why it is essential that we "go big" in building back better to our Nation and all of its people have the opportunities and resources to compete and win in the changing global economy of the 21st century.

Madam Speaker, it is often said that the federal budget is an expression of the Nation's values and the investments made to Build America Back Better are a clear declaration of congressional Democrats' commitment to ensuring that our government, our economy, and our systems work For The People.

Madam Speaker, these long-overdue investments in America's future will be felt in every corner of the country and across every sector of American life, building on the success of the American Rescue Plan, accommodating historic infrastructure investments in the legislative pipeline, and addressing longstanding deficits in our communities by ending an era of chronic underinvestment so we can emerge from our current crises a stronger, more equitable Nation.

Madam Speaker, the bipartisan action we took in February 2021 when we passed the American Rescue Plan was a giant step in the right direction, but it was a targeted response to the immediate and urgent public health and economic crises; it was not a long-term solution to many of the pressing challenges facing our Nation that have built up over decades of disinvestment in our Nation and its people in every region and sector of the country.

We simply can no longer afford the costs of neglect and inaction; the time to act is now.

The Build Back Better Act makes the transformative investments that we need to continue growing our economy, lower costs for working families, and position the United States as a global leader in innovation and the jobs of the future.

This \$1.75 trillion gross investment will build on the successes of the American Rescue

Plan and set our Nation on a path of fiscal responsibility and broadly shared prosperity for generations to come.

The Build Back Better Act will provide resources to improve our education, health, and child care systems, invest in clean energy and sustainability, address the housing crisis, and more, all while setting America up to compete and win in the decades ahead.

The Build Back Better Act is paid for by ensuring that the wealthy and big corporations are paying their fair share and Americans making less than \$400,000 a year will not see their taxes increase by a penny.

Let me repeat that: Americans making less than \$400,000 a year will not see their taxes increase by a penny.

In sum, Madam Speaker, the investments made by the Build Back Better Act will expand opportunity for all and build an economy powered by shared prosperity and inclusive growth.

No one is better prepared or more experienced to lead the American renaissance that will be produced by the investments made by the Build Back Better Act than President Biden, the architect of the American Rescue Plan and who as Vice-President during the Obama Administration oversaw the implementation of the Recovery Act, which saved millions of jobs and rescued our economy from the Great Recession the Nation inherited from a previous Republican administration.

And let us not forget that President Obama also placed his confidence in his vice-president to oversee the rescue of the automotive industry, which he did so well that the American car industry fully recovered its status as the world leader.

Madam Speaker, one aspect of the Build Back Better Act that does not get enough attention is the fact, as documented by the Department of the Treasury, that the legislation will generate more than \$2 trillion in fiscal savings.

These savings come from ensuring large multinational corporations and wealthy Americans pay their fair share and reducing the cost of prescription drugs.

These provisions will not raise taxes on any taxpayer making less than \$400,000.

As a result of these changes, the ability of large corporations to shift profits abroad will be substantially limited, and the race to the bottom in corporate taxation will no longer be a driving force weakening capital taxation.

In short, the Build Back Better Act under consideration in the House of Representatives will be fully paid for and reduce the deficit.

Madam Speaker, let me briefly highlight some of the key investments made by the Build Back Better Act:

The Build Back Better Act expands access to quality, affordable health care by strengthening the Medicare, Medicaid, and Affordable Care Act (ACA) Marketplace programs that millions of Americans already rely on.

It includes a major new expansion of Medicare benefits, adding a hearing benefit to the program for the very first time.

Only 30 percent of seniors over the age of 70 who could benefit from hearing aids have ever used them.

The Build Back Better Act strengthens the Affordable Care Act and reduces premiums for 9 million Americans who buy insurance through the Affordable Care Act Marketplace by an average of \$600 per person per year.

Just for example, a family of four earning \$80,000 per year would save nearly \$3,000 per year (or \$246 per month) on health insurance premiums and experts predict that more than 3 million people who would otherwise be uninsured will gain health insurance.

The Build Back Better Act closes the Medicaid coverage gap, leading 4 million uninsured people to gain coverage.

The Build Back Better Act will deliver health care coverage through Affordable Care Act premium tax credits to up to 4 million uninsured people in states that have locked them out of Medicaid.

A 40-year-old in the coverage gap would have to pay \$450 per month for benchmark coverage—more than half of their income in many cases, but thanks to the Build Back Better Act individuals would pay \$0 premiums, finally making health care affordable and accessible.

The Build Back Better Act strengthens the ACA by extending the enhanced Marketplace subsidies that were included in the American Rescue Plan.

It also provides an affordable coverage option for the more than two million Americans living in states that have not expanded Medicaid under the ACA and do not earn enough to qualify for Marketplace subsidies.

When the Build Back Better Act is fully implemented, soon gone will be the terrible old days when too many Americans are forced to choose between medical care and putting food on the table or affording other necessities.

Madam Speaker, approximately 3.9 million Black people were uninsured in 2019 before President Biden took office and even with the Affordable Care Act's premium subsidies, coverage under the ACA was too expensive for many families, and over 570,000 Black people fell into the Medicaid "coverage gap" and were locked out of coverage because their state refused to expand Medicaid.

The Build Back Better Act closes the Medicaid coverage gap while also lowering health care costs for those buying coverage through the ACA by extending the American Rescue Plan's lower premiums, which could save 360,000 Black people an average of \$50 per person per month.

With these changes, more than one in three uninsured Black people could gain coverage, and with the addition of hearing coverage, more than 5.8 million Black people on Medicare will benefit.

The Build Back Better Act will make an historic investment in maternal health, including for Black women, who die from complications related to pregnancy at three times the rate of white women.

Madam Speaker, the cost of preschool in the United States exceeds \$8,600 per year on average, and for as long as we can remember, child care prices in the United States have risen faster than family incomes, yet the United States still invests 28 times less than its competitors on helping families afford high-quality care for toddlers.

The Build Back Better Act supports families in need of child care by providing access to safe, reliable, and high-quality care delivered by a well-trained child care workforce.

The Build Back Better Act will provide universal and free preschool for all 3- and 4-year-olds.

This is the largest expansion of universal and free education since states and commu-

nities across the country established public high school 100 years ago.

This is important because our Nation is strongest when everyone can join the workforce and contribute to the economy.

That is why this investment is vital to so many millions of people—especially women—who are often forced to choose between working to support their family or caring for their family.

The Build Back Better Act will ensure that the vast majority of working American families of four earning less than \$300,000 per year will pay no more than 7 percent of their income on child care for children under 6.

Under the Build Back Better Act, parents who are working, looking for work, participating in an education or training program, and who are making under 2.5 times their states median income will receive support to cover the cost of quality care based on a sliding scale, capped at 7 percent of their income.

The Build Back Better Act will help states expand access to high-quality, affordable child care to about 20 million children per year—covering 9 out of 10 families across the country with young children.

For two parents with one toddler earning \$100,000 per year, the Build Back Better Act will produce more than \$5,000 in child care savings per year.

In addition, the Build Back Better Act promotes nutrition security to support children's health and help children reach their full potential by investing in nutrition security year-round.

The legislation will expand free school meals to 8.7 million children during the school year and provide a \$65 per child per month benefit to the families of 29 million children to purchase food during the summer.

The Build Back Better Act will deliver affordable, high-quality care for older Americans and people with disabilities in their homes, while supporting the workers who provide this care.

Right now, there are hundreds of thousands of older Americans and Americans with disabilities on waiting lists for home care services or struggling to afford the care they need, including more than 800,000 who are on state Medicaid waiting lists.

A family paying for home care costs out of pocket currently pays around \$5,800 per year for just four hours of home care per week.

The Build Back Better Act will permanently improve Medicaid coverage for home care services for seniors and people with disabilities, making the most transformative investment in access to home care in 40 years, when these services were first authorized for Medicaid.

The Build Back Better Act will improve the quality of caregiving jobs, which will, in turn, help to improve the quality of care provided to beneficiaries.

Madam Speaker, I cannot emphasize enough how important it is that the Build Back Better Act will also reduce the cost of home-based care for the hundreds of thousands of older Black adults and Black people with disabilities who need it and are unable to access it.

Not to mention that investment in home care will raise wages for home care workers, 28 percent of whom are Black.

In the area of housing, the Build Back Better Act makes investments to ensure that Americans have access to safe and affordable

housing by providing resources to increase housing vouchers and funding for tribal housing.

It also supports investments in programs that will help address our Nation's housing crisis by increasing the supply of affordable homes for those in need and investing in historically underserved communities and those that have been previously left behind.

Specifically, the Build Back Better Act makes the single largest and most comprehensive investment in affordable housing in history and will enable the construction, rehabilitation, and improvement of more than 1 million affordable homes, boosting housing supply and reducing price pressures for renters and homeowners.

It will address the capital needs of the public housing stock in big cities and rural communities all across America and ensure it is not only safe and habitable but healthier and more energy efficient as well.

It will make a historic investment in rental assistance, expanding vouchers to hundreds of thousands of additional families.

And, perhaps even more importantly, the Build Back Better Act includes one of the largest investments in down payment assistance in history, enabling hundreds of thousands of first-generation homebuyers to purchase their first home and build wealth.

In short, Madam Speaker, this legislation will create more equitable communities, through investing in community-led redevelopment projects in historically under-resourced neighborhoods and removing lead paint from hundreds of thousands of homes, as well as by incentivizing state and local zoning reforms that enable more families to reside in higher opportunity neighborhoods.

The Build Back Better Act will provide two years of free pre-K and two years of free community college to ensure every student has the tools, resources, and opportunity to succeed in life.

It will also invest in our teachers and institutions that serve minority students and provide funding to give school buildings long-overdue infrastructure updates.

People lead happier, healthier, and more productive lives when they have had access to high-quality education and that is why the Build Back Better Act makes necessary investments to increase quality education by four years for all students at no cost to hard-working families.

The Build Back Better Act expands access to affordable, high-quality education beyond high school, which is increasingly important for economic growth and competitiveness in the 21st century.

Specifically, the Build Back Better Act will increase the maximum Pell Grant by \$550 for the more than 5 million students enrolled in public and private, non-profit colleges and expand access to DREAMers.

It will also make historic investments in Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and minority-serving institutions (MSIs) to build capacity, modernize research infrastructure, and provide financial aid to low-income students.

The Build Back Better Act will help more people access quality training that leads to good, union, and middle-class jobs and will enable community colleges to train hundreds of thousands of students, create sector-based

training opportunity with in-demand training for at least hundreds of thousands of workers, and invest in proven approaches like Registered Apprenticeships and programs to support underserved communities.

The Build Back Better Act will increase the Labor Department's annual spending on workforce development by 50 percent for each of the next 5 years.

The Build Back Better Act will spur and empower comprehensive action to build an equitable clean energy economy with historic investments to transform and modernize the electricity sector, lower energy costs for Americans, improve air quality and public health, create good-paying jobs, and strengthen U.S. competitiveness—all while putting our country on the pathway to 100 percent carbon-free electricity by 2035.

The Build Back Better Act extends and expands clean energy tax credits and supports clean electricity performance payments so utilities can accelerate progress toward a clean electric grid at no added cost to consumers.

The Build Back Better Act invests in clean energy, efficiency, electrification, and climate justice through grants, consumer rebates, and federal procurement of clean power and sustainable materials, and by incentivizing private sector development and investment.

Another exciting aspect of the Build Back Better Act, Madam Speaker, is that it will drive economic opportunities, environmental conservation, and climate resilience—especially in underserved and disadvantaged communities—including through a new Civilian Climate Corps.

Madam Speaker, the Build Back Better Act includes a \$100 billion investment to reform our broken immigration system—and does it consistent with the Senate's reconciliation rules—as well as to reduce backlogs, expand legal representation, and make the asylum system and border processing more efficient and humane.

Madam Speaker, immigrants eligible for such protection are an integral part of Texas' social fabric.

Texas is home to 386,300 immigrants who are eligible for protection, 112,000 of whom reside in Harris County.

These individuals live with 845,300 family members and among those family members, 178,700 are U.S.-born citizen children.

These persons in Texas who are eligible for protection under the bill arrived in the United States at the average age of 8 and on average have lived in the United States since 1996.

They own 43,500 homes in Texas and pay \$340,500,000 in annual mortgage payments and contribute \$2,234,800,000 in federal taxes and \$1,265,200,000 in state and local taxes each year.

Annually, these households generate \$10,519,000,000 in spending power in Texas and help power the national economy.

The expansion of the Child Tax Credit (CTC) enacted in the American Rescue Plan has already benefitted nearly 66 million children, put money in the pockets of millions of hard-working parents and guardians, and is expected to help cut child poverty by more than half.

The Build Back Better Act not only extends this meaningful tax cut, but it also extends the expanded Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the expanded Child and Dependent Care

Tax Credit, which help families make ends meet and put food on the table, reduce child poverty, and lessen the burden on hard-working Americans so they can provide a better future for America's children.

Madam Speaker, 22.1 percent of Black people fall below the poverty line, struggling to pay expenses like food, rent, health care, and transportation for their families.

By extending the Child Tax Credit, the Build Back Better Act provides a major tax cut to nearly 3 million Black people and cuts the Black poverty rate by 34.3 percent, which will help the 85 percent of Black women who are either sole or co-breadwinners for their families.

By permanently extending the American Rescue Plan's increase to the Earned-Income Tax Credit from \$543 to \$1,502, the Build Back Better Act will benefit roughly 2.8 million Black low-wage workers, including cashiers, cooks, delivery drivers, food preparation workers, and child care providers.

Earlier today, I celebrated with many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle at the White House where President Biden signed into law the Senate Amendment to the Invest Act of 2021, which invests into our infrastructure:

\$121 billion for Roads, Bridges, and Safety;
\$89.9 billion for Public Transit;
\$66 billion for Passenger and Freight Rail;
and
\$55 billion for Drinking Water Infrastructure and Assistance.

Of the amount of public transit funding authorized in the legislation, my home state of Texas is expected to receive \$3,269,170,516, which is more than ample for the Federal Transit Administration to allocate the \$20 million authorized for Harris County's METRO's BOOST Corridor project in my congressional district provided in the version of the Invest Act passed by the House in June of this year.

The population of Harris County is projected to exceed 10 million people by 2040, which makes it crucial to develop a plan that addresses the growing demand for expansion of public transit.

Approved by voters in November 2019, the BOOST plan includes 500 miles of travel improvements to help ease traffic congestion and provide more ways to move around.

The BOOST plan calls for 75 miles of new METRO Rapid bus service that operates like light rail, along with expansions to two-way HOV lanes, park and rides, transit centers, light rail, and community connector service, and enhancement to local bus stops to improve accessibility, safety, and security.

With funding provided in the legislation before us, my constituents and residents and visitors in Harris County can look forward to a better walk with new or improved sidewalks along and/or near the route and improved crosswalks at intersections for your safety; a better wait at bus stops; and a better bus ride, with faster and more reliable service with streamlined stops along the route, traffic signal improvements at key intersections to improve bus speed and reliability by reducing the time buses spend waiting at red lights, and improvements designed to create easy traffic flow for buses and cars.

Let me highlight a few of the major components of the Senate Amendment to H.R. 3684, the Invest In America Act, which represents the fulfillment of a promise to the American people.

THE INFRASTRUCTURE ACT ON ROADS, BRIDGES, AND SAFETY

Delivers \$121 billion for better roads and bridges faster by increasing investment by 54 percent, with an emphasis on fixing existing infrastructure;

Dedicates \$32 billion for bridge funding to ensure bridges in communities of all sizes are safer, more reliable, and more resilient;

Invests \$4 billion in electric vehicle charging infrastructure, helping the U.S. shift to the next generation of clean vehicles;

Dedicates \$8.3 billion for activities targeted to reduce carbon pollution and provides \$6.2 billion for mitigation and resiliency improvements, also advances the development and utilization of green construction materials;

Makes our roads safer with a significant boost to roadway safety programs, record levels of investment in walking and cycling infrastructure, complete streets planning and smarter road design, and safe routes to schools;

Focuses transportation planning to promote mobility and facilitate access to jobs and other essential services, and reconnects communities that were divided by highways with a new \$3 billion program to correct planning mistakes of the past;

Targets investments to areas of persistent poverty, rural communities, Tribes, and other continually disadvantaged areas;

Helps elevate state and local priorities by funding Member Designated Projects.

THE INFRASTRUCTURE ACT ON TRANSIT

Provides \$89.9 billion and makes record investments in transit to increase routes, reduce the transit maintenance backlog, and provide more frequent service, resulting in better options for riders, improved environmental outcomes, and increased access to jobs and essential destinations;

Scales up investment in zero-emission transit vehicles, supporting fleet conversion to reduce local air pollution and related health impacts and these investments are paired with strong Buy America requirements and provisions for workforce training to ensure America can compete in the clean energy economy;

Funds and incentivizes transit-oriented development to make transit more convenient to where people live and work and builds sustainable, walkable communities;

Increases funding for rural transit by more than 50 percent in the first year and sets aside \$50 million a year for rural persistent poverty communities and creates a pilot to improve flexibility in paratransit trips, allowing for brief stops such as childcare pick-ups and drop-offs, and short trips to the grocery store, pharmacy, or bank;

Creates a new reduced-fare pilot program to improve access for low-income riders, and doubles the set-aside for urban area formula dollars based on low-income population and deep poverty census tracts and directs transit agencies to serve these populations;

Streamlines the Capital Investment Grant program to improve project delivery, reduce red tape, and achieve cost savings for transit agencies; and

Creates new programs to address several pressing transit challenges—improving compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and addressing transit deserts by providing expanded transit service to unserved and underserved communities.

THE INFRASTRUCTURE ACT ON PASSENGER AND FREIGHT
RAIL

Provides \$66 billion for passenger and freight rail, tripling funding for Amtrak, allowing for enhanced service, ADA upgrades, and investments to renew and support service on the Northeast Corridor and long-distance and state-supported routes;

Provides funding for corridor planning and development of high-speed rail projects, reducing traffic congestion and shortening travel times;

Improves rail safety by addressing highway-rail grade crossings needs, requiring additional rail safety inspectors, addressing trespasser and suicide fatalities, and eliminating gaps in railroad safety; and

Creates a federal blocked crossing program to collect data and enforce a 10-minute blocked crossing limit.

THE INFRASTRUCTURE ACT ON DRINKING WATER
INFRASTRUCTURE AND ASSISTANCE

Authorizes \$55 billion for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, the primary source of federal funding for safe drinking water infrastructure;

This investment in drinking water infrastructure, will help eliminate the Nation's lead service lines and pipes, thereby delivering clean drinking water to up to ten million American families and more than 400,000 schools and child care facilities that currently do not have it, including in Tribal nations and disadvantaged communities;

As many as 10 million lead service lines are currently in use, including an estimated 400,000 schools and child facilities with lead components; and

The legislation also strengthens drinking water standards and improves the Environmental Protection Agency's ability to set those standards, and directs EPA to set health-protective national standards for PFAS, 1,4-dioxane, and microcystin toxin within two years.

In addition, the legislation provides:

1. \$15 billion in zero emission and clean buses and ferries and builds the first-ever national network of electric vehicle chargers in the United States, in order to address the adoption of electric vehicles and support domestic manufacturing jobs;

2. \$42 billion to modernize our airports, ports, and waterways;

3. \$50 billion to weatherize our infrastructure and insulate it against the threats of droughts, floods, and wildfires;

4. \$65 billion to upgrade our power infrastructure to facilitate the expansion of renewable energy;

5. \$21 billion in environmental remediation, making it the largest investment in addressing the legacy pollution that harms the public health of communities and neighborhoods in American history; and

6. \$65 billion to connect every American to reliable high-speed internet, building on the billions of dollars for broadband deployment in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

To put it all in perspective, Madam Speaker, although we already passed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill, we now have a once-in-a-century opportunity to make gigantic progress in making ours a more perfect union, and to do it in a single bound with enactment of the Build Back Better Act, the most transformative legislation passed by this Congress since the Great Society and the New Deal.

I would urge my Republican colleagues to heed the words of Republican Governor Jim Justice of West Virginia who said colorfully earlier this year:

"At this point in time in this nation, we need to go big. We need to quit counting the egg-sucking legs on the cows and count the cows and just move. And move forward and move right now."

The same sentiment was expressed more eloquently by Abraham Lincoln in 1862 when he memorably wrote:

"The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew and act anew. We must disenthrall ourselves, and then we shall save our country."

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

BREAKING NEWS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. BEATTY. Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to yield to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE). She is the second vice chair of the powerful Congressional Black Caucus. She is also one of the co-chairs of our Women's Caucus.

At this time, I would like to say to my colleague and to my friend: Thank you for your leadership, and thank you for your strong voice.

As a former mayor, we know she is used to leading, guiding, and speaking out.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my CBC colleague, my CBC chair, an amazing leader for our country, JOYCE BEATTY, for leading this Special Hour. I also want to thank Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE, my colleague and mentor. She is just amazing.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of Build Back Better. We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to make a transformational change for women, for families, and for communities of color.

Abigail Adams wrote a strong letter to her husband, John Adams, "Remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors."

Today, I stand on the floor so proud and blessed to say that we have President Biden and Vice President HARRIS, who are laser-focused on helping women and families in Michigan and across the country.

We are talking about remembering women and women of color. From affordable childcare, eldercare, expanding the child tax credit, and providing universal pre-K, this agenda lifts women out of poverty and educates our children while lowering costs.

I want to be very clear as we stand here today as the Congressional Black

Caucus, Black women in America carry the highest amount of student debt in America. So when we talk about Pell grants, this has a direct impact for Black women in America. When we talk about childcare and eldercare, women are the predominant workforce in eldercare and childcare, and they are disrespected with one of the lowest salaries for employment in the country.

Let's talk about expanding the child tax credit. We know that for single women heads of households and families who are struggling to work and put their children in safe and affordable childcare, this is transformational.

Madam Speaker, I had a father text me. We were on a Zoom townhall on this issue of childcare. He said: Congresswoman, I pay more for childcare than I do for the mortgage of my home.

□ 1945

This is transformational. When we talk about build back better, we are not talking about going back to a time in history. We are talking about being transformational and visionary and planning and plotting a path to success for all Americans. We know it is women—we saw this very clearly during the pandemic—who are bearing the brunt of all of these social challenges and Black women being in the top of that group bearing the brunt of this pandemic.

It is Black and Brown women who disproportionately make up our childcare workers, and, again, I emphasize making poverty level wages. We can't turn a blind eye to this. The Black Caucus will not be quiet. The Women's Caucus will not be quiet. We know that when we lift women—when we lift Black women—out of poverty, we are changing the economic structure in America. There are women who work two jobs—one to pay for childcare and one to pay for the mortgage, food, and shelter. I want you to know, Madam Speaker, that the Build Back Better plan builds back better for women and families, and it is time to get it done.

I am so proud today to sit outside and watch the President sign into law the largest investment in our infrastructure to fix roads. For me, the priority is fixing the water infrastructure in America. A pothole is an inconvenience, but we need water to drink to stay alive and for human life.

We know we have kicked this can down the road. We have had so many infrastructure weeks. But now history will say that Joe Biden led the way with this Congress and this Senate to start investing in our infrastructure. We are going to get the job done. We are really going to build back better.

Mrs. BEATTY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman so much, BRENDA LAWRENCE, for her leadership—breaking news.

Let me just say, as Congresswoman BRENDA LAWRENCE said so well, we are not going to be quiet. Today, we heard President Joe Biden not be quiet. We